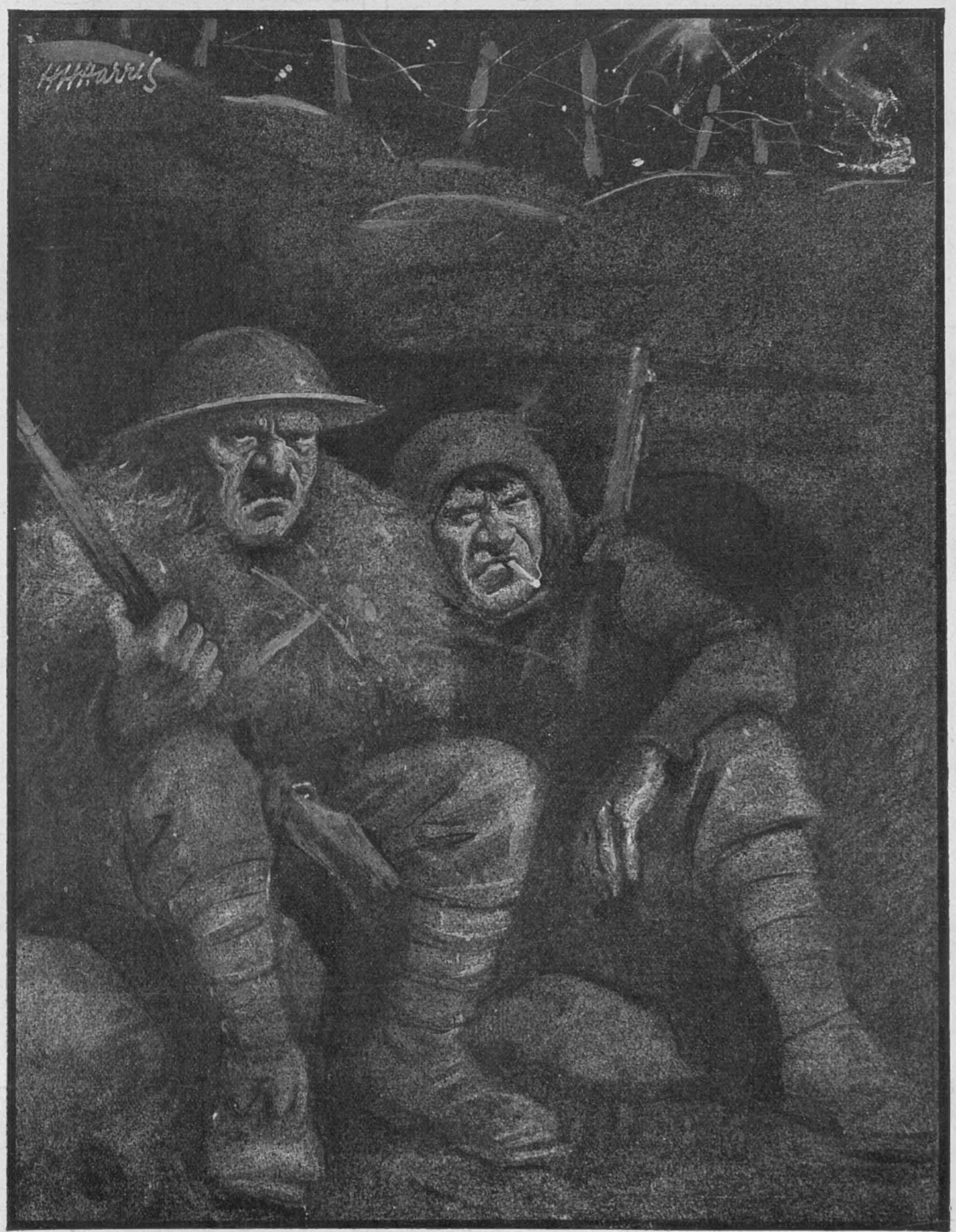
The Bystander. January 2, 1918.—No. 735. Vol. LVII.

The BYSTANDER



THE WATCH-NIGHT SERVICE

Time—2 a.m., January 1st, 1918.

THE MURMURING VOICE: "Bloomin' long year, mate—ain't it?"

BYSTANDER COMMENTS ON THE WORLD WAR — AND ON THOSE WHO WAGE IT WISELY AND OTHERWISELY

The New Year

FOR the New Year THE BYSTANDER makes, according to established custom, one fervid resolution (which will not in any circumstances be broken.) This resolution is: To provide as good fare (unrationed) for its readers in the future as it has done in the past, in order that their eyes shall be gladdened and their hearts lightened. THE BYSTANDER also has two wishes: it wishes the country luck—and the Government pluck.

Not So Much Talk!

SINCE there's no harm in hoping, we will hope that the New Year just starting will give us Peace with Victory. It won't be the fault of our fighting men if we don't get both; but for goodness sake don't let us here at home relax for an instant our efforts to back them up. Let us not, either, have any hazy ideas that if we hold on for another three or four months, America will come and finish the war for us. It is upon our own efforts that we must in the main rely to attain the ends we require; and those efforts are only stultified by talking of Leagues of Nations and Super-National Authorities What was the Hague Tribunal but a League of Nations and a Super-National Authority?—without a sanction, it is true. And what did the Hague Tribunal ever do except talk and draw up humanitarian schemes which the first rough breath of war shredded into thin air?

HIS FIRST "CALL" IN 1918

UNCLE SAM: "Sorry to put you out, Willie; but your sword's on fire!"

Ugly Whispers

THE name of "the lady of high birth" who smuggled a letter through (who said *one* letter?) to the late German Ambassador at St. James's is well known in certain circles. It is amusing, however, that this pitiful business took so long to reach the Lobbies. Some months have passed since, as rumour says, the lady openly bragged of her escapade in a friend's house, where, unfortunately for her, there was at least one person present of correct views. The immediate sequel is never likely to be forgotten by the letter-writer, and had it not been for her high position her exalted circle would certainly have missed her.

Our Plague of M.P.'s

ON whatever front, by a decisive action, the war may be won for us there is only one place where it could possibly be lost—and that is at home. Our politicians wallow in an orgy of talk, and the men at the head of departments, where prompt action is vital, have to spend hours every day in preparing replies to the silly questions asked by fussy M.P.'s in the House. And nineteen out of twenty of these so-called legislators would be tumbled into obscurity if only the electors could get a chance of removing them. As it would be an outrage to have an election before we get a new register, there should be an intermediate lethal state provided. Why should not M.P.'s wear gas-masks, and why should there not be such a plentiful discharge of this vapour as will ensure that they keep them on?

The Premier Without a Party

MR. GEORGE has no party and no medium. Mr. Gulland has safely penned up the vast majority

(*Continued on page 12*)

"The Third Day Comes a Frost"

THE PUBLIC (on the bank): "Never mind, Jellicoe; you've cut a figure in history that all men would envy!"

("*Sir John Jellicoe has been skating vigorously at the London Skating Club in Regent's Park.*"—DAILY TELEGRAPH)

BYSTANDER COMMENTS (concluded)

of the Liberals and they merely vote with L. G. (sometimes many of them even now vote against him), because it suits Mr. Gulland's plan that they should do so. The Unionists similarly are nothing but adherents *pro tem.*; and if Mr. George went to the country he would have to find his own candidates and create organisations throughout the country to secure their return. It is significant that he has taken no such steps. Even the newly formed, or shall we say forming, National Party is in a happier case; and, by the way, Mr. George is following its progress very closely. Probably he would prefer to lead the Labour Party, but the job is not vacant, as the saying goes.

We Want a "Push" at Home

WE need rations instead of orations. Will Sir Arthur Yapp kindly note? And why tarry the wheels of the Rhondda chariot? As for my Lord Northcliffe, is he weary of spurring two continents, or has he found virtuous silence in a viscounty, or is it but the lull before a raging Carmelite storm? There are rumours that he has unearthed a super-Bolo and is about to smash him and all his gang.

Czernin-Blondin

COUNT CZERNIN'S reply to the Russian delegates could not have been bettered (from the German point of view) if it had been composed in the Wilhelmstrasse—as, indeed, it probably was, though it was the Austrian diplomat who was charged to deliver it. (Perhaps because it may be convenient to disown it later on, if the Bolshevik-Maximalists prove unable to deliver the goods.) Count Czernin's position was not altogether a pleasant one, for he had to avoid, on the one hand, frightening the Russian pigeon away before the hawk could get its claws well in, and on the other to present terms, which, fair-seeming enough, yet leave Germany free to back out of them. A task worthy of a Blondin.

Phrase-making

HIS speech was, therefore, full of pleasant but non-committal phrases, such as "in so far as it is practically feasible," which represents as large-meshed a net as any diplomat could desire to be entangled in. This was the phrase attached to the self-government of Alsace and Poland, which the Russians had asked for. The restoration of the independence of Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, and Montenegro, also requested by the simple-minded delegates, was conceded "in principle." The German colonies must be restored—and no doubt Russia's present rulers will have no hesitation in granting this eminently reasonable request, more especially as they are naturally fully able to enforce it!

ANXIOUS ABDUL: "I vonder vot Vilhelm vould say if ve vos to use our Stepney—and go home?"

FOXY FERDY: "Allah knows!"

Russia as the Cat's-paw

BUT the *clou* of the whole thing was the masterly attempt to make Russia drag in the Allies. As Count Czernin very truly said "It would not do for the Central Powers, negotiating one-sidedly with Russia, to bind themselves without a guarantee that Russia's Allies will recognise and carry out the agreed conditions." A more simple-minded body of men than the Russian delegates can hardly be in existence. Perhaps it is the fault of uninstructed democracy that it is inevitably simple-minded. The one thing that Germany wants is not peace with Russia, or peace with the Allies; she wants to keep the Russian front quiet with talk and fraternisations (brothers have cut one another's throats before now!) while she can transfer her troops to places where more danger threatens her; and so to help on the "defeatists" everywhere.

Heads—and Brains of the W.A.A.C.

MRS. BURLEIGH LEACH
Controller of Inspection and Head of Cookery Section of the W.A.A.C.

MRS. CHALMERS WATSON, C.B.E.
Chief Controller of the W.A.A.C.

MISS EDITH THOMPSON
Area Controller of London District

MRS. ESSLEMONT
Unit Administrator of Connaught Club draft-finding depôt hostel for passing through recruits for the W.A.A.C.

MRS. ANDREWS
Controller of Recruiting. Inspector for the Local Government Board seconded for work with the W.A.A.C.

MISS F. H. DURHAM
Chief Woman Inspector, Employment Department, Ministry of Labour, is in charge of recruiting for W.A.A.C.

THE Women's Army Auxiliary Corps is the result of the praiseworthy persistence of women to give real and most valuable assistance in the War. Its activities are multifarious, and its value is being increasingly recognised day by day. The women at the head of the organisation, portraits of some of whom we reproduce, are all women who know their job thoroughly, and of the type who "get things done." The country owes them much, and will owe them much more yet.

Photographs *Hoppé*

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(Second Edition)
Production by Albert de Courville.
GEORGE ROBEY.
Alec Fraser, Cicely Debenham, Daphne Pollard, Phyllis Bedells.
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MATS.: WEDS., THURS. & SATS. at 2.30.
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for the support of HUNDREDS OF RECREATION HUTS, TENTS and CENTRES for our gallant men at home and in every theatre of war, including about 200 under shell-fire on the Western Front. An INDISPENSABLE BOON both to wounded and whole.

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Yours sincerely, ——Engr. Sub-Lt., R.N.R.

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"IN ENGLAND-NOW!"

A WEEKLY LETTER FROM "BLANCHE."

ILLUSTRATED BY HELEN McKIE.

LONDON, *December* 31, 1917

DEAR COUSIN—

THOUGH the world may seem to be falling to ruins around us, one always feels, somehow, doesn't one, that we simply *must* give the New Year a greeting all its own, a send-off and a sporting chance, so to speak? The poor dear's only a baby after all, and who knows . . . ? It's a long lane that never turns the corner, and with luck or the right man or men, 1918 may prove to be the winning number and see England—though war-worn and battered by these long years of shocks and upheavals—once again her proud, triumphant self; our heads "bloody but unbowed."

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AFTER all, it's our turn, isn't it? See-sawing's the only rule of war as we know it in this cataclysm that's swallowed up the remembrance of all others that ever were. And our end of the balance has been down so long it's time we shot skywards again, right on the crest of the wave, with the Hun down under, where he belongs. But before that most-to-be-wished-for of the New Year revolutions, I'm afraid, there's a lot got to happen yet, hasn't there? And it's up to us at home to see that it *does* happen. For the men out there—in Flanders and Mesopotamia, in Palestine, the hard-pressed Italian line, and all those other distant fronts—have every one of them done, and are doing, their very damnedest.

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THE wheel's now turned half circle, and it's from this side that the great, heartening, upward push has got to come. The soldier and the sailor men give the biggest thing that human beings

"The oh-yes-we-know-what-it's-like look"

can give—themselves, their lives. Our job's the easier and the safer one, though it may be—or ought to be—almost as strenuous. Guns and munitions, ships and shells, aeroplanes and equipment—to turn out all these at the high-power speed and in the vast quantities we need, is no light task for an ease-loving nation, any more than rationing itself and cutting down its luxuries, so that food shortage shan't make all the valour of our battle-fighters go for naught.

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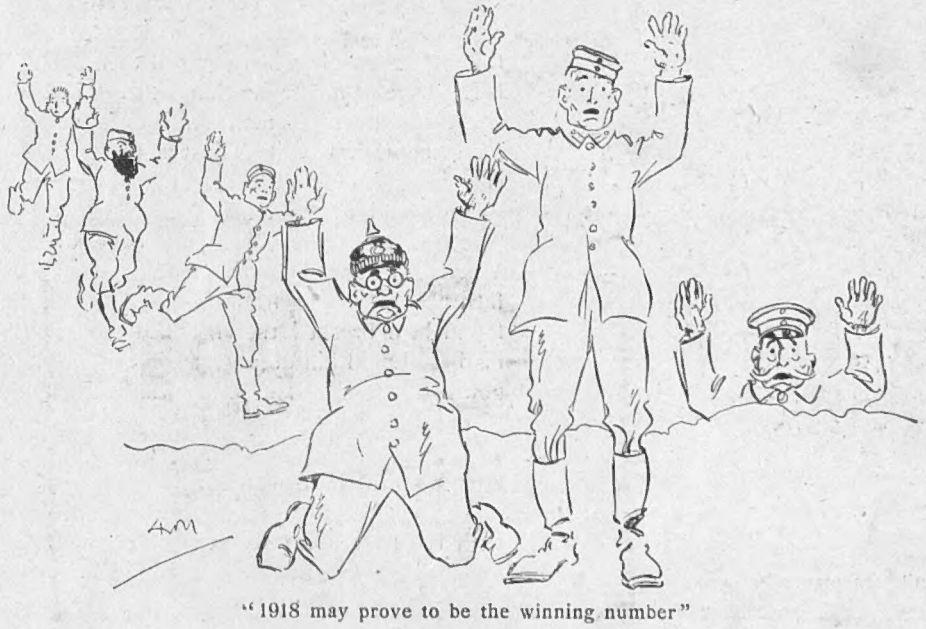
AND that'll do for our 1918 New Year good resolutions, I think, the whole lot boiled into one—for us to do our damnedest too. We can give a miss this time to all the minor ones, like less chocolates and no taxis or sugar in our tea. Besides, most of them have been put into practice already for us, without any extra virtue being required on our part, thank you. In these days of foodless shops and quarter-mile tea-queues, when even in the best and smartest stores they

(Continued on page 16)



"1918 may prove to be the winning number"

barricade the butter-counter and put up turnstiles to the tea department, self-denial's rapidly becoming an obsolete or, anyway, unnecessary art. And when those rations arrive—as arrive they will, of course, and soon—it'll be an absolutely dead dud and an also-ran in the Virtue Stakes. Not much credit in being good by Act of Parliament, is there?

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Not the least war-winning merit of rationing is that it will leave our minds clear for matters more important than whether we shall or shan't get bacon for breakfast to-morrow. Probably we shan't, of course; but anything's better than the perfectly awful uncertainty of life and meals as we get 'em at present. And, perhaps, things being at last fixed and irrevocable, there'll be a little less, even when we miss a whole course, of that grousing which the Prime Minister says undermines the national *moral*. No good getting peevish over little things like that, is it, when "we must save another three million tons on our food imports this year. Every ton of food we produce, or save, is an increased weight hurled against the Prussian barrier"?

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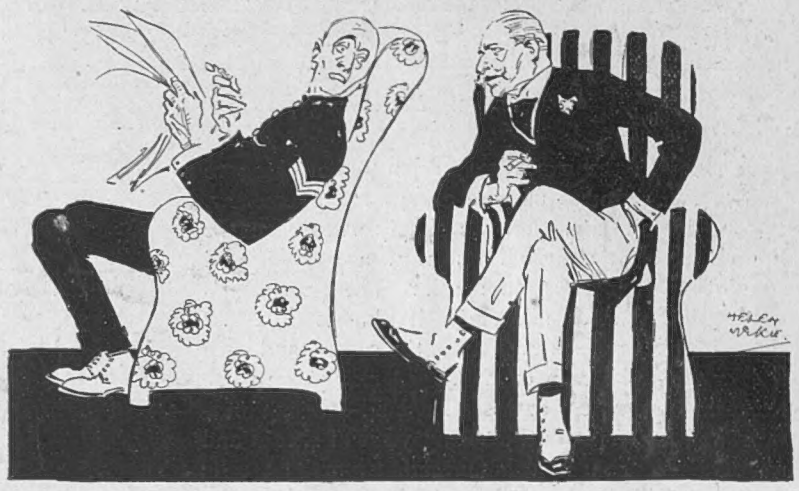
As to that other great problem of the New Year, the man-power one—Lord knows how they're going to settle that, since Ireland is still sacrosanct, and, what with the physical and the economic sides of the case, they *can't* make up their minds whether to take the man of forty-five or not. But why not? Conscript him—and the women too! After all, they needn't necessarily take 'em out of their -jobs at all so long as they know where to lay their hands upon them when wanted. It wouldn't hurt us to take a leaf from Germany's book, just for once, anyway, would it? Come to think of it, war's just a game of imitations, and collaring other people's ideas. They owe us something, too, for the Gothas and the artilleryless attacks, among other little things that they've lifted from us.



"Whether to take the man of forty-five or not"

In any case, seems we do strike the man on leave as beginning, anyway, to take things rather more seriously here in England now. "During my 12 days," writes one, with just a touch of regret—for the old days "when our dug-outs were the Four Hundred, Murray's and the Cabaret Club" seem as far away as the wood and stone hatchets, don't they?—"I came to the conclusion that all the really nice girls must be war-working, and even the others only went out between moons! Quite astonishing, by the way, how many people in London these days seem to pore over the almanac and arrange their affairs—and their outings—by the phases of the moon. I quite expect when I get back on my next leave to hear that the calendar month has been washed right out and that we've gone back to the lunar one and are fixing up our engagements for 'two moons hence,' or, 'during the next big wind.'

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"One result of the raids I noticed, by the way, is a certain rather oh-yes-we-know-what-it's-like sort of look you get from some people when you tell them you've been having rather a thin time. I don't think the average man on leave's all out for sympathy, but it *is* just a bit trying to get, instead of that rather nice little arm-squeeze and misty tenderness in her eyes: 'Oh, yes, we got one quite close to us! We had to spend *hours* in the cellar, and father was simply frightfully sick when he found he'd brushed the cherished cobwebs off his beastly old bin of port with his dressing-gown. It really does bring the war home to one. . .'

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"Had a hottish time, by the way, to get into the leave train at all, what with having to dash for it through a Boche gas-shell *strafe* with my mask on and falling

(*Continued on page 18*)

"Quarter-mile tea-queues"

THE BELLE OF THE NEW YEAR'S BALL

Photograph *Johnstone*

WAR'S CHANGES FOR HOUSE AND HORSE

Dalzell House Hospital has been enlarged to take in more and more wounded men, some of whom are daily taken out for drives in a carriage drawn by Lord Hamilton of Dalzell's favourite hunter

"*IN ENGLAND—NOW!*" (*concluded*)

into some thousands of shell-holes in the dark—gas masks do help you to find 'em! But when I got to town the first thing I heard was an old lady indignantly proclaiming she was going to leave the hotel that minute, as the maid had refused to fill a hot water bottle for her parrot, which was not at *all* well. So I knew there couldn't be a beastly war on after all!"

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TALKING of the fighting men, "you've forgotten, dear Blanche," writes one of them, "to mention or throw a word of cheer to yet one more hard-worked branch of the junior service in this muddy land of Flanders—I mean the Pioneers (us). We are the folk who go trapesing along after the infantry in the pushes and build things, and get most of the barrage and none of the *kudos*. Even when there isn't a show on we go up most nights and dig holes in places, and very probably have to go up the next night and fill 'em in again. So, taken all round, 'tis a weary existence and we'd be frightfully bucked to get a word from you."

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PIONEERS, oh, Pioneers! . . . Is there anything harder than that sort of work, I wonder? But after all that's just war, isn't it, digging holes and filling 'em up again; and it's got to be done while the Hun still cumbers the earth. And I don't think they *are* forgotten, the men who do the work that doesn't, perhaps, get the limelight in the newspapers and places. If the war's taught us anything it's how enormously details count, how far

Each little candle throws his beam

like good deeds in a naughty world, and how every link in the chain is just as important as the other links.

卐 卐

MY best New Year wishes to 'em all, and may they let the good work go on and I only wish there were more of them, or that their example might penetrate a little farther—say, to the busy hordes of shoppers in Oxford Street and places, from whose well-nourished and well be-furred backs the veriest flood of national appeals slips unheeded, unfelt, and unanswered.

卐 卐

WELL, the truth is, I'm afraid, that 1918 here in London now *does* find us, if not exactly depressed, anyway a little weighed down with the seriousness of these grey days. But there's always this about a New Year—it *is* a new one. The old one's gone beyond recall, there's no good gained by repining, only by looking forward. And after all the days *are* lengthening and spring will come again, with its warmth and colour and life and light. As a soldier-poet sings—

Return to greet me, colours that were my joy,
Not in the woeful crimson of men slain,
But shining as a garden; come with the streaming
Banners of dawn and sundown after rain.

I am not sad; only I long for lustre—
Tired of the greys and browns and the leafless ash,
I would have hours move like a glitter of dancers,
Far from the angry guns that boom and flash.

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NEITHER war nor winter can last for ever. So after all I *will* wish you a happy New Year. Whatever its fortunes it must, at least, bring us nearer to the end.

With love, yours ever, BLANCHE

Low-Spirited—but not Downhearted!

"SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?"

"Somewhere in Flanders"

CHRISTMAS REJOICINGS

My Dear Bystander—

It was Christmas Eve; and I had that Yuletide feeling in my bones. A westerly gale soughed through the elms in the meadow by the road, and the rain rattled unrelentingly upon the window-panes, serving to remind us that the merry season, with its feasting and good cheer, was impinging rapidly upon us, and that the time had come to write home and request that the fatted turkey be slaughtered and forwarded to France without delay.

⁂ ⁂

It would seem as if some smouldering sentiment of a bygone age still lurks in the average man and inspires him to move heaven and earth to arrive in Blighty towards the end of December, endowing him with a mental stimulus in the definition of the "urgent private affairs" which necessitate his immediate presence in England that is little short of the uncanny; though one simple candidate has learned to his surprise that the military machine is criminally indifferent as to whether or no he desires to embrace the faith of a Plymouth Brother, merely throwing out the callous suggestion that this momentous step in a man's life might well be done by correspondence.

What is it, I wonder, that lures men in their thousands back across the billowy Channel at the most depressing season of the year? Is it memories of the old Yule log or the Ludo counter? Is it the call of the mistletoe? It is none of these things. It is just force of habit. All householders have it in the blood. Some uncontrollable force compels them to get back in time to give a *2s. 6d.* Christmas-box to the postman, the milkman, the policeman, and the dustman. Nothing can turn them from their purpose. They are desperate about it.

⁂ ⁂

Not being a householder myself, and having no prospect of ever owning any mansion other than a disused railway carriage (third-class) I preferred to let Christmas break quietly upon me in France. It is better so. What guarantee had I that I did not find myself involved in some form of indoor winter game with a jolly maiden aunt as partner declaring that her first is a vowel, her second a preposition, and her third an archipelago, or asked to state the difference between an elephant and a silk hat, or be called upon to rack my brains to find a river in Asia beginning with a Z, and on my failure to do so some one would put a hot plate down my neck as a forfeit, and the children clap their hands?

⁂ ⁂

Not that I dislike winter pastimes in the least. I entertain, and have always entertained, the sincerest regard for hunt-the-slipper and postman's knock. But at the moment I somehow felt that to have my eyes blindfolded and have a powerful boy of ten hit me in the back with a hobby horse and ask me to guess who hit me would have provoked me to a fit of retaliation.

⁂ ⁂

It is better that Christmas should be passed restfully in France. With us it is a simple but joyful affair. On the same day each year the interpreter (who is in the trade himself and saves a clear 40 per cent.) sets out to acquire seven bottles of Veuve Clicquot and a tin of Petit Beurre biscuits. At midday the staff gathers reverently round the master, corks hit the ceiling, and long and deep we quaff of the sparkling foam what time we pledge, with tears in our eyes and the hope that they may freely forgive us, all the innocent persons we have been the means of getting locked away in concentration camps.

Yours ever,

Jack Johnson

[Sour grapes, eh?—Editor.]

Canadian Official Photograph from the Western Front

WHERE EAST MEETS WEST

Major Prince Amoradhat of Siam (in the light coat) watching shells falling in Lens in company with British, French, Canadian, American, Portuguese, and Rumanian officers

Mars—NOT Venus

PASSED BY CENSOR

THE PEPSTEIN OLD BILL

This enthralling work is the latest production of Mr. Ephraim Pepstein, the famous sculptor. You will be glad to see that going into the Army has not spoilt his touch.

BY CAPTAIN BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

EDDIES of WAR

THE BOOK-WORM. BY DELL LEIGH

All the belligerent countries had been angling for the State of Imagitonia to come into the circus of war. For this little, and very wealthy, State had certain geographical and other weapons, which everyone else wanted to use. But the State of Imagitonia lived up to its name and held its hand, knowing full well the truth of the old axiom that the unwilling seller can boost up the price to unheard of figures if only he continues to practise the difficult art of patience.

* *

So the State continued to make munitions for both sides at huge profits, and thanked God that it was not as other men are. What the State did not, however, take fully into its calculations was the power of the Business Man, which fraternity, as I have said, had bent its great mind upon getting Imagitonia to come in. A life member of this brotherhood of brains was one Emile Perrier. Now Emile Perrier's firm had goods to sell—did, in fact, sell them all over the fighting world, to the mutual benefit of the Board. Emile had had his eye on the Capital of Imagitonia throughout the whole period of the secret negotiations, and, with the consent of his co-directors proceeded thither with a *carte blanche* expenses account just before the declaration.

* *

Emile's house, you will understand, was famous in both hemispheres ; and when it sent out a commercial ambassador in the shape of the immaculate and linguistic Emile, that worthy arrived *en prince* with his valet and proceeded to spread himself over a suite of first-floor rooms at the most expensive hotel he could find. It is noteworthy that, although the firm had never bothered to push its wares into this little State, the War Minister's own secretary was numbered among Emile's many acquaintances. This fact was not unconnected with the directors' desire that Emile should journey to the State on their behalf. This firm wastes no time when there is business afoot, and even before he had removed the stains of travel, Emile wrote to the secretary on the firm's beautiful notepaper, and asked him to dinner. The secretary, knowing Emile's lavish hospitality, came with alacrity, and the *maître d'hôtel* at the *Grand Café de l'Europe* was told to see to it that the dinner was of the best.

* *

Behold, then, the two personalities ! The astute diplomatist with the thin, nervous fingers and close-set eyes ; the business Emile, all frankness, *bon camarade* ; and both of them fencing like the skilled brain duellists they are. Emile inquires almost affectionately after the War Minister—what a wonderful man he is, *parbleu !* So simple in his tastes, *n'est ce pas ?* By the way what *are* his particular tastes ? This was during the coffee stage, when the secretary was cutting the end of an almost unprocurable cigar. "Oh ! as you say, his tastes are absurdly simple. His great delight is in books—a 'book-worm' I think the English would call him." This was the only hint Emile got. But it was enough. The next day the secretary received six books bound in crimson Niger "as a small mark of esteem for a great man." He received no acknowledgment. On inquiring by telephone as to their safe receipt, he finds the secretary very busy and "cold" "Oh, yes ! they had arrived ; but the minister does not care for that kind of book. *Au revoir !*"

* *

Emile pondered. He knew his country, although he had never done business with it. There was much business to be done—heaps of it ; and many things (most expensive things) the State would want, if it came in, which Emile could supply. They were already placing orders for war material such as Emile had to sell. The secretary had implied as much at dinner, adding that it was, of course, merely a precautionary measure. Exactly. Emile had smiled inwardly. He pondered over the "book-worm." Why had the secretary told him that ? Then suddenly the light broke. Dare he try ? Of course, why not ? The next day he sent two books only to the secretary, for the minister. Quite commonly bound they were and very dull ; treatises on anthropology—very learned.

* *

By some curious mischance a certain number of thousand franc notes got interleaved among the pages. A very natural carelessness on the part of a man who travelled with a *carte blanche* expenses account in a country where cheques are not much in use.

The next morning a note, verging on effusion, reached Emile. The minister instructed him to say that he found the books *most* interesting. They dealt ably with a subject which, to him, had always been enthralling. The secretary added that his chief had sat up till a late hour reading them, and had inquired if the secretary's kind friend had got any more like that ?

Emile had plenty more and despatched half a dozen in the same manner.

* *

He did not stay very long in the Capital. The secretary was very kind, and sent him with personal introductions, which amounted almost to orders, to those departments of the State that were buying (as a precaution only) Emile's goods. It was a profitable journey from the point of view of Emile's co-directors—very profitable—although the travelling expenses were the heaviest they had ever put through their ledgers.

On his way home Emile wondered to what extent the secretary shared his chief's simple tastes.

Terrors of Typhoon at Tokio

Our photographs illustrate the ravages caused by the worst typhoon Tokio has experienced for fifty years. One of them shows the havoc among the buildings on the sea-front swept down by the tidal wave; another the main street of Isukishima, almost entirely destroyed; and the third the crowds wading out to get drinking water from a broken main which ran over the ruined Aini Bridge.

The Bystander in Paris

"I like to see one of our old brown-faced poilus"

MES AMIS—

ALREADY the dustman has demanded his *étrenne*, and to-morrow or next day will come the postman and the *concierge* and the little girl who brings the *journaux*. For Lucile and Léonie I have chosen my New Year gifts, and to those I love who are at the front I have sent what will give them the most pleasure.

⁂

IT is to you now that I must send my greeting. It is so sincere. Perhaps *Monsieur le President* will send to your King George the good wishes of France to England for 1918, and I would not wish, my friends, to pretend to myself that I am so important as *Monsieur le President*; but it is the greeting I send of a true French girl to all who love France.

⁂

FOR many weeks the shops have been full of gifts. It is hard to think sometimes, here in Paris, that it is our fourth New Year's Day of war. There is only very little that one cannot buy, and the great shops have been so uncomfortable with the great many people who push. When I went one day to the Galleries it was like a match of football. The world which buys is not as it was, so *chic*. There are now of the others, the not very nice people who have made money in the war and have not yet learned good manners.

⁂

THERE is of one thing a great lack. In all the shops and cafés which sold tobacco there are little notices being hung at the door: "*Il n'y a plus de tabac ni de cigarette français.*" Only one day or two each week the Government sends to all the shops a little supply and then one sees hundreds of men making a queue with a policeman at the door. It is very sad for them. They look so without dignity standing in a row outside a shop. At the front there is enough tobacco and the *poilus* look quite pleased to see *Messieurs les civils* waiting in the cold when they walk past blowing great clouds from their pipes.

⁂

IT is strange how the war has made a change in our *poilus*. When the *bleuets* of 1914 went to the *casernes* they smoked the cigarettes they made themselves with their little papers and *caporal*. But now every *poilu* smokes a pipe. One sees even the officers in Paris walking with a great pipe which they would not ever have done in the smart days before the war. It is the English who smoke always cigarettes. Long ago, when our countries were not so good friends, Frenchmen made always the caricatures of Englishmen with a pipe enormous.

⁂

BUT now that has quite changed. Lucile says that it is more *chic* to smoke a cigarette, but I like so to see one of our old brown-faced *poilus* in his blue uniform with the mud of Champagne or the Vosges on his boots, and with his helmet on his head, walking so content down the boulevards smoking a pipe.

⁂

THERE is one place in Paris where your soldiers have spent a happy Christmas and will

(Continued on page 26)

"A BETTER HOLE"

"The postman, the concierge, and the little girl . . ."

Times Change, but Customs Endure

RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

THE BYSTANDER IN PARIS (concluded)

have a great *fête* on the day of the New Year. It is the Leave Club in the Place de la République. It is very beautiful, the Leave Club, all gay and jolly with flags and flowers, and in the big rooms the soldiers can play the billiards and cards and can read and write. They get so good dinners too, and once every week there is a concert where even our best opera singers go and sing, and on one evening there is a dance.

⁂

ALL is so strange now in Paris since these last three years that it is the only place, this Leave Club, where there is ever any dance. For us French people it is impossible; but we do not think your soldiers should not dance. Only the ladies who work at the Club are their partners, and the men are not like ours, who have their homes near and their *marraines* here to make them comfortable, but have come so far to France from Canada and Australia, and the New Zealand to fight for you and for us.

⁂

THEY are so quiet, but they so enjoy it to waltz in the great hall with ladies and they are so like children. It is that that most makes us wonder at your soldiers. They fight so fierce and they are so quiet and gentle that they do just what the ladies tell them. I think that the wives of French officers would not dance with simple soldiers, not because they are what you call snob, but because—well, it would be different.

⁂

IT is to tell a so good joke that I write of the Leave Club They have a book and in it all the soldiers write little things. Your Prince wrote something and many great officers. But it was some days ago that the lady, who is the chief of the Club found that a soldier had written: "I have found a 'Better Hole.'"

⁂

IT was, I think, the young Bert of Monsieur the Captain Bairnsfather who wrote that. How funny it is to me that a soldier of England should walk in the Place de la République of Paris and write such a strange message. And in Jerusalem, Salonika, Italy, and Bagdad, there are perhaps, too, English soldiers who have found a "Better Hole."

⁂

EVEN in this war, which is so near home, it is the English soldier who goes to the far away to fight. We French stay at home—we have much to stay at home to do—but you, you go everywhere. One does so wonder why you do it. For me I do not think there is "a better hole" than your "Blighty," but you are all the time leaving it to make an Empire *fantastique*. And you call your *patrie* "Blighty" and make jokes all over the world

"They so enjoy it—to waltz"

and never seem seriously to understand what you are doing.

⁂

IT was an Italian officer who said to me: "We Italians fight because our Government wishes some advantages to the nation. You French people fight for your own defence; but the English will not quite know why they are fighting till the war is over."

⁂

I AM not sure if he is right, but I have found a little poem in a strange book which an English friend once gave me and I do not very well understand, except in parts, which seems to me so true:—

I knew no harm of Bonaparte and plenty of the squire,
And for to fight the Frenchman I did not much desire;
But I did bash their baggonets because they came arrayed,
To straighten out the crooked road an English drunkard made.

⁂

I DO not think the road was made by a drunkard, but I do love to think you fought because you liked its nice crookedness. To all you strange English people I wish you may find in 1918 "a Better Hole"

Your friend, AGNES.

"It is the Leave Club"

Nightmares

PASSED BY CENSOR

No. 1—THE OBSERVER'S

Guns that are Speaking

Australian Official Photograph taken on Western Front

A battery of howitzers putting down a barrage in support of an Australian attack

French War Official Photograph

A battery of French guns in the vicinity of Rheims that has done enormous execution amongst the Huns preparing to attack

A nasty, u

in Answer to Peace Talk

French War Official Photograph

pleasant, inquiring, "nosey" look is possessed by this French gun; camouflaged, surely, by some artist, the exhibition of whose talents has hitherto been confined to the Salon

Shrapnel Pars

THE Bolshevik Commissary for Foreign Affairs has dismissed all the Russian Ambassadors. It is expected that this procedure will be adopted with all future revolutions.

A MANCHESTER man is reported to have waited so long in a butter queue that he decided to marry and settle down there.

TROTZKY the Terrible has now threatened his opponents with the guillotine. This is no doubt his idea of enforcing the sacred principle of equality, he and his followers having already lost their heads.

LORD LANSDOWNE'S trouble seems, after all, merely to have been that he wrote a letter which completely disguised his real meaning. In view of his long diplomatic career, there is, perhaps, some excuse for him; but he really ought to have remembered that he isn't at the Foreign Office now.

WE should much like to know who was responsible for guaranteeing Tino an income of £25,000 a year. The utmost he can be said to have earned was thirty pieces of silver.

MRS. GRUNDY—if she still survives—must make what she can of the news that trousers are becoming more and more popular among women war-workers. It looks as if the war would be won by the joint efforts of the men in the breach and the women in the—you know!

MR. NOEL BUXTON has been showing a special interest in the speeding up of the Channel Tunnel. It might provide quite a serviceable dug-out for a whole lot of pacifists and "conchies" in the event of another war.

SIR MALCOLM MORRIS says that he has always thought kissing one of the silliest things ever invented. Yet what a lot of money the inventor would have made if he had taken out a patent.

SAYS a headline in a contemporary, "Dangerous Lunatic Employed at the Censor's Office." These things always leak out, don't they?

THERE is no halfway house between victory and defeat, says Mr. Lloyd George. What about the Hindenburg Line?

DR. ADDISON says that men will return from the front feeling that they cannot be satisfied with a country that is not substantially better than before they went. We are under the impression that they will be agreeably surprised if they find it no worse.

SOMEONE has said that Jerusalem should be made a place in which to sign treaties of peace. Why not a place in which to discount Prussian Bills?

MR. CHURCHILL says there are no substitutes for victory. M'yes! But what about a legitimate gamble?

PUBLIC school problem: On what playing-fields was Gouzeaucourt nearly lost?

WE are authorised to contradict the rumour that Lord Harberton, whose book, "How to Lengthen our Ears," is enjoying so much success, has in preparation a companion volume entitled "How to Lengthen our Wars."

LAST week's air-raid had at least one good effect. It entirely abolished the food-queues.

SUBJECT for one more grand historical painting at the Potsdam Palace: The Kaiser returning thanks for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Turk, as requested by Papal Edict.

BEFORE the war young couples used to meet on the Q.T. Now they meet in the T.Q.

"CARRY ON"

All on Account of "Dora"

"SOUR GRAPE" RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

"ANY OLD THING"

AT THE LONDON PAVILION

BY "JINGLE." *Illustrated by EDWIN MORROW*

THIS very bright and lively entertainment suggests the query: When is a Revue not a Revue? The first scene is devoted to a formal renunciation of the Revue and all its works; and if the rest of the entertainment is not a Revue, it is, at least, a very fine imitation of one. We drift, for instance, right away into a playful burlesque of the doings of the dismal nonentities who for reasons best known to themselves ask embarrassing questions in the House of Commons while the Government is trying to get on with the war. It is all good fun, and shows the author of it to possess a clear sense of humour, which is more than one can say for the objects of his mirth.

✲

A BRIGHT little playlet is called "Do You Take Sugar?" which is a question that one does not ask on purpose to-day. The answer is too dangerously ready. There is Phyllis, alone in her flat, hubby having been called away to Glasgow on urgent business; and, as we all know, nothing but very urgent business will take a man to Glasgow. By the merest accident in the world, Jack, a gentleman who occupies a neighbouring flat, mistakes the door and walks in. I mean, it is the sort of thing that might happen to anybody, don't you know. Before he has had time to apologise sufficiently, hubby comes back unexpectedly. It's an irritating way that hubbies have. The only thing Jack can think of is to crawl under the table and wait there till the clouds have rolled by. Any port in a storm, what?

"WHEN WE ALL WEAR TROUSERS"

✲

HUBBY calls for his slippers. He has missed the Glasgow train, and as he has six hours to

(Continued on page 34)

In her Mountaineering Millinery

Photograph *Elliott and Fry*

MISS IVY DUKE

Whose latest portrait we present above, is one of the chief successes in "The Maid of the Mountains" at Daly's Theatre

wait for the next one he has come back home to wait in comfort. No, he won't go to bed, neither will he go and sit in the kitchen or anything of that sort. He is going to sit at his ease in his own armchair while Jack is getting several kinds of cramp under the adjoining table. Furthermore, hubby orders coffee, and when it is brought in it is observed that there are three cups instead of two. By way of explaining the phenomenon, hubby lifts the corner of the table-cloth and politely asks his unwilling guest if he takes sugar. Knew he was there all the time. This scrap of amusing nonsense is excellently acted by Miss Avice Kelham as Phyllis, Mr. R. N. Cory as Jack, and the inimitable John Humphries as "Any Husband."

*

AFTER a stirring pantomime showing how Food Hog tried to steal Little Red Riding Hood's pound of butter, with Mr. Humphries as Red Riding Hood in three colours, we get some scenes called "Contrasts." The first part of the scene shows the usual trouble on the Underground. The usual man is occupying a seat in a full train, and the usual lady gets in and hangs on to the strap in front of him in such a way as to crumple his evening paper now and then, and to cannon into his shiny silk hat. Apparently this is the method adopted by the ladies, after careful consideration and long experience, in order to bring to the notice of their victim the fact that he is sitting while they are standing up. Naturally, the man, after grumbling a little to himself, gives up his seat. But the next part of the scene shows us the man saying to the lady just what he would have liked to have said in the first part if the conventions had not restrained him. The same scene also loosens the lady's tongue, and a man who incurs a responsibility of that kind only deserves what he gets.

AN extremely funny playlet is entitled "Between the Lines," which will easily be recognised as the burlesque of a popular London play. The burlesque is given in dumb show, but Mr. Humphries is there to explain the action as the story proceeds, and it is this explanation that makes all the fun. It is quite an ingenious novelty, and keeps the house laughing all the time. Mr. Humphries, who works very hard in the revue, also has a quaint scene entitled "Letting a Flat," in which he represents the house porter authorised to deal with applicants.

*

A REVUE without an incident in the life of Old Bill would, of course, have no chance nowadays. The incident here has the advantage of having been written up by Captain Bairnsfather and Captain Eliot, and Mr. Humphries is Old Bill to the life. *Any Old Thing* is just the kind of entertainment for the season.

JINGLE.

The Fighting Spirit

"ONE DOWN, T'OTHER COME ON!"

The Immortal William

BY ARNOLD GOLSWORTHY

It is a well-known weakness of human nature that when a man has risen from the ranks, as it were, and has become a Successful Person, one of the first things he does is to visit the College of Heralds to trace a dubious descent from a glorious ancestry and, by devious ways, to acquire the right to display a coat-of-arms. But Private William Busby, known to the world and one or two of the nearest planets as "Old Bill," in spite of the fact that he has become a Somebody, is far above a petty ambition of this sort. He is just a plain, blunt soldier, and though he is not afraid of having his past revealed, he is too busy to dig into it himself. Scarcely a day passes, however, without some friend of his rising to point out that William Busby has been famous through the ages. It was only the other day that somebody discovered in a folio edition of Shakespeare the note, evidently in Shaky's own handwriting, "*cf.* Wm. Busby," opposite the line, "a soldier full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard."

✲

And now an amiable reader sends word to say that in one of the rooms of Winchester College, of all places in the world, there is a marble block inscribed as follows:—

William Busby
C. 1774 F.

The letters on either side of the date, it appears, stand for the words, *Consanguineus Fundatoris*, which mean that William Busby can trace his descent from the pious founder of Winchester College, the justly celebrated William de Wykeham. Somehow or other, in thinking of Old Bill, one does not at once associate him mentally with scholars and founders of great colleges; but that only shows how easily you may be deceived in a man. As a matter of fact, if William de Wykeham came back to earth to-day no one in his senses will deny that Old Bill could teach him something.

✲

This welcome association of Old Bill with Winchester, however, is more than usually interesting. It throws light on an incident that has puzzled some of our learned men for years. As everybody knows, one of the alternative names of the Doomsday Book was "The Book of Winchester." In the Doomsday Book there is mention of a man referred to as "Wlm. BB.," which, now that we are wise after the event, is obviously a terse, but convincing pen-picture of Old Bill. The B's form, as it were, practically his identification disc.

✲

From this point we are now able to trace Old Bill as one of the knights who came over with the Conqueror in 1066. On the Bayeux tapestry is depicted a scene showing a certain "Willelm B." standing in front of King Harold, who is suffering for the moment from the disadvantage of having an arrow in his right eye. "Willelm B." is clearly William Busby, because he is asking the unhappy monarch, in the quaint language of the period, "Whither didde ytte one goe?"

✲

Students of Pepys have now discovered word of a meeting of the great diarist with Old Bill somewhere about the year 1660. As thus, "To mine alehouse where did take my morning draught, and found there many soldiers making great noise for that their pay was in arrear, whereupon did make gentle protest to one whose face was all but concealed by a pair of drooping moustachios. The fellow replied insolently that if haply I were acquainted with a more advantageous excavation, 'twere meet I hied me thither, whereat his boon companions laughed a great deal but for no reason that I could determine. With that I did enter into converse with the fellow who told me his name was William Busybee or Buzzbee, and borrowed a half-pound from me the which he pledged himself to repay to me on Saturday, but did not do so. Wherefore——"

✲

But at a time when we are keeping our minds fixed on Old Bill's glorious past, it is not for me to rake up painful little incidents that he has probably forgotten, and blinking well means to forget, anyway.

A TEA TABLE TRAGEDY

Sitting the Old Year Out

A Queue for a bite of butter,
A Queue for an ounce of tea
—And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me!

Straight Shooting

A STORY OF THE MOTOR BOAT PATROL.

BY JOHN S. MARGERISON

(Author of "The Sure Shield," "Action!" "Turret and Torpedo," etc.)

"MONITOR, forsooth!" observed Temporary Lieutenant Roderick Fraser, R.N.V.R., disgruntled. "A pretty monitor we are, and a fat lot of excitement we're getting out of the job—I *don't* think! Not a Boche have we seen for the last week, not a target to shoot at—and. even if we did see one, I much misdoubt if we'd be able to hit it."

Petty Officer "Jumper" Collins, the only pukka Navy man among the half dozen who formed the crew of the motor boat *Chi-Chi* and one of the Navy's most expert gunlayers—looked up from the breech of the three-pounder Vickers semi-automatic gun which peered obtrusively over *Chi-Chi's* bows.

"You'll excuse me, sir," commenced the petty officer, "if I mention that you're mishandling the truth. You know full well that there isn't a target made that I'll not shove ten holes into in a minute, and that as soon as we see anything worth strafing you'll see more than a little straight shooting."

"I wonder," retorted Roderick. "Anyway, let's see you make your words good. Here's a target for you at last, and one that'll require all your skill to hit."

Round the bend a train, evidently bringing up supplies, puffed slowly into sight.

"Jumper" smiled happily, dropped his cleaning rags to the deck, and sprang to the sight of the little weapon. And in the same second his two loaders closed up in position and brought the three-pounder to the "ready." At Collins's order five thousand yards range was placed upon the sight, but, though he took exceedingly careful aim, his first shot fell some hundreds of yards short of the train, which, having now sighted the motor boat, was cramming on all possible speed to escape destruction.

"Damn!" snapped Collins, "that's a rotten start."

Hastily adjusting his sights once more, he fired again. The shell fell just ahead of the engine, and, aiming at the last truck, the gunlayer planted his next three rounds nicely where they would do most good—the first in the tender among the coal; the second through the centre of the foremost carriage, and the third ten yards to the left. Jumper intended his next round should punch a hole in the engine boiler, but just at the critical moment something went wrong with the works. The breech closed on a full round, the trigger snapped, but the gun, instead of leaping back in the moment of discharge, remained stationary and silent.

The gunlayer swore; and, utterly regardless of the rules appertaining to misfires, shoved his loaders out of the way, and flung open the breech. The cartridge was untouched, and a hasty examination of the breech mechanism showed the firing pin snapped off short.

"Just my luck," said Collins. "Just as I find the range and settle down to enjoy myself—and to show Roddy that I can still shoot straight—something's bound to happen. It'll take three minutes to ship a new striker, and by that time the Boche in the puffer will be out of sight and range."

"If you could have shot straight," remarked Fraser, with a grin, spinning *Chi-Chi's* bows round, you'd have finished the train in the first ten seconds. I'll give you another chance at her, though you certainly don't deserve it."

Fraser had remembered that the railway line curved sharply round a bend of the canal, and towards this bend the boat now tore at the top of that speed which, in the otiose days of peace, had won her commander so many cups and shields and pendants at regattas. The hurrying train came into view just as the mechanism was readjusted, and without waiting for orders, Collins started his gun practice once more.

He was dead on the bull this time; the engine suddenly disappeared behind a cloud of brown smoke, then a jet of hissing steam shot upwards and dispersed the smoke, allowing *Chi-Chi's* crew the sight of the engine toppled over on its side, and the following carriages piling themselves upon it by reason of their impetus.

"Well, sir," demanded Collins, "What about that shooting now? Is it straight enough for you?"

Fraser had no time to reply; he was too busy taking the boat clear of the falling shells sent up by an angry seventeen-inch howitzer, which, itself out of sight, plastered the canal with huge projectiles. An observation balloon, looking like a fat sausage at the end of a string, rose steadily into the air and directed the howitzer's fire so effectively that *Chi-Chi* was compelled to remove herself hastily to more healthy quarters. She nipped unseen up a tiny backwater, and hid herself from observation for awhile.

Collins, fight-hungry, spat on his hands and took a sight at the swaying sausage.

"Just a little lower, my lad," he told it, "and I'll put the wind right up you."

"Keep as quiet as possible, and wait an hour or so," put in Fraser, "and maybe I'll give you that balloon as an easy target, Jumper. You seem to require a little practice."

Collins lifted the gun to her greatest angle of elevation, but still the sausage was too high for effective shooting. Therefore, as *Chi-Chi's* allowance of ammunition was none too prodigal, he wasted no shells, though if curses could have been effective the stay of that balloon in the air would have been of short duration.

So Fraser set his crew of five performing odd jobs against the time when the Boche should decide to

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(Continued on page 40)

No. 1. *The Navy.*

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"STRAIGHT SHOOTING" (*concluded*)

haul his observation balloon down. By the aid of a sextant and many abstruse calculations, Roderick marked in his mind's eye the line she would take in her return to earth, and scientifically laid the gun so that it should bear upon a certain spot in that line. At last, the balloon was observed to be descending, and Collins and his crew leapt to their places at the weapon.

"Don't keep me waiting," said the petty officer to his loaders. "Shove the shells into the gun as fast as you can, and I'll shove 'em into Fritz. A little delay will spoil the whole thing, please me exceedingly, and send Roddy off his head with joy—perhaps!"

He spoke no more, but screwed his eye into his sighting telescope and waited. Presently the slowly descending balloon swam into his field of vision, and in an instant the gun barked again and again, as the loaders worked manfully and rapidly. The Boche in the balloon lost his head; the surprise was overwhelming, for he had fancied himself safe from all attack. Also, the fact that he could not see his antagonist made him panicky. He reached out for the ripping cord and pulled it, and as the gas escaped the balloon sank rapidly.

Collins pressed his trigger still more swiftly, but still he had not hit that swaying bulk. Then a lucky shell severed the rope hauling down the sausage, and, released for the first time in its existence, the balloon bounded upwards, and began to drift towards *Chi-Chi's* place of concealment.

"The incendiary shells—quick!" cried Collins. Smack 'em in smartly!"

The special projectiles whizzed through the air with a queer whistling and burst into hundreds of tiny flaming fragments; but still the gasbag remained unhit. Then, at last, a tiny red flame appeared at her blunt nose, a long tongue licked along her entire length, and, a blazing beacon, she fell earthwards.

"Just like the pictures of the burning Zeppelins they had in the papers a little while back," commented Jumper, well pleased with himself. "And all she's got to thank for her very warm finish is this little popgun and my straight shooting."

Chi-Chi backed astern, and brought up all standing with a soft, dull thud.

"A sand bank—and we're likely to have to remain here for the night," exclaimed Fraser. "And what's more it's a bank that's not marked on the chart."

"Ay!" replied Collins. "If the navigation of this war vessel was as good as its shooting, we'd need no charts. And by that same token, here comes something else we've not got marked on the chart—trouble!"

He waved his hand at the forms of some threescore German soldiers who had appeared on the twilit shore. They were the guard from the balloon station, anxious to exact vengeance for the loss of the sausage, for which they would later on have to account. As Collins spoke a rifle cracked, and a splinter flew from the motor boat's deck.

Fraser dropped the now useless wheel and sprang to the Maxim perched at *Chi-Chi's* stern; the engineer at his heels with a full belt of cartridges. The staccato chattering of the weapon drove the Boches to cover where they might be secure from the leaden stream of death. But still they fired.

One of Fraser's men received a bullet in his thigh and dropped into the well where the bulk of the motors protected his body. But, realising that the engines were more precious than himself, he crawled round to the other side till they were behind him and shielded him from flying bullets, when he used the excellent Lee-Enfield rifle allotted to him with great deliberation and precision whenever a flash among the dense reeds ashore gave him a target to fire at.

"Those reeds are an infernal nuisance," remarked Fraser savagely. "If we could only set them on fire we'd be able to see better what force we've got to deal with."

"Leave it to me, sir," said Collins.

With a queer glint in his eye the gunlayer selected an incendiary shell with extreme care. Pulling off the lid of a brass cartridge, he poured half the contained cordite into his handkerchief, which he then bound tightly round the nose of the projectile with a handy piece of yarn. Then, screwing the base of the missile into the half-empty cartridge case, he inserted the contraption into the gun, and, putting the weapon at its lowest depression, fired.

The charge was just powerful enough to lob the shell into the reeds exactly opposite *Chi-Chi* and just at the place from whence came the fiercest stream of bullets; and, as it struck the ground, the percussion fuse of the shell exploded, and, besides sending flaming fragments to all quarters of the compass, also ignited the loose cordite in the handkerchief.

The stuff blazed terrifically, igniting the reeds close at hand, and the shore immediately became a sea of fire. The Germans turned and raced for safety—it was a terrible matter for the wounded and those unable to escape, all of whom died swiftly in that inferno.

"God!" muttered Collins, half aghast at his own achievement. "Hell itself—and without a lid, too." Then he turned and laughed shortly. "But it serves 'em right—they should play the game. Their own liquid fire can't hold a candle to that little blaze—and it all comes from brains and straight shooting."

The glare of the burning reeds and the noise of the shooting brought up two other motor boat canal monitors, both heavier and better armed than *Chi-Chi*. Naturally they wanted to hear the whole yarn, but the horror of the fire was still too fresh for any of Fraser's men to talk about it. Finally, Roderick being the senior officer, they requested instructions.

"One of you carry on patrolling the canal," ordered Roderick, at last. "The other can tow us off this sandbank. We're going home—we want to keep pigeons or start a farm; this war provides too much excitement for men of our quiet tastes."

He smiled and turned to Petty Officer Collins.

"Oh, and I say!" he added; "if either of you should require a little instruction in the art of gunnery, I've got a real expert here—one that can do anything with a gun, from chewing up enemy supply trains to setting fire to a battalion of infantry. Besides being about the cheekiest petty officer that ever wore a rate, he's also the finest exponent in the whole of the British Navy—and that means in the whole of the world—of straight shooting!"

JOHN S. MARGERISON

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The Limit!

MRS. BLENNERNUGGIT: "Well, now, I *do* call that rude! And so many aeroplanes about, too!"

Books *of the* Week

"The Heritage of Elise"

THE heroine of Miss Mary Skrine's new novel, *The Heritage of Elise* (Arnold: 6*s.* net), is a girl of the streets. Fortune is not too kind to Elise of the many surnames, yet she is really a millionairess, which most ladies of her kind are not. Just why she is never permitted to enjoy her riches makes up the plot which Miss Skrine sets herself out to unfold. There is some good careful work in the book. The inevitable will crops up, it is true, and most of the things there are to be said about an old cathedral town have already been said, but Miss Skrine writes in an attractive way, and the interest is well maintained.

❀ ❀

An Indian Yarn

MRS. PERRIN and Mrs. Penny have made us fairly well acquainted with the various peculiarities of the peoples of India. If, for instance, you are a young lady with an English father but a native mother, even if she happens to have been a high-born Afghan, and your father dies, you have to be careful. Yvonne Noel, whose history Mr. Alec Holmes relates in *The Song of the Stars* (Allen and Unwin: 5*s.* net), went to Quetta to join her grandfather's family, and naturally didn't like it. And when her scoundrelly old grandfather, Mongol Khan, found out that she was really an heiress, things became very complicated. However, there came Jim Lloyd, of the police, to the rescue, and matters turned out very well in the end. The theme is rather old, and the book does not possess that originality which marked out its predecessor, *The Emporium.* But it is all eminently readable, and there is some pleasant comedy centring round a G.O.C. and his A.D.C.

❀ ❀

A First Novel

ALAN MACKINNON'S first novel, *Love by Halves* (Fisher Unwin: 5*s.*), is an interesting piece of work which, however, will not please all people. It is nowhere particularly sympathetic, but it is undoubtedly clever. A young girl fond of kissing anyone who takes her fancy leaves her ultra fashionable mother to study music in Germany—naturally before the war. She becomes a prima donna, has a liaison with a Bavarian Royalty (Mr. Mackinnon does not make it sound as awful as I am sure it must be), comes back to England as more or less of a celebrity, marries, meets a Tunisian gentleman and for the first time really falls in love and finally solves a difficult problem by returning to the opera stage. There is a queer sort of semi-guardian, called Evelyn Reynolds, and there is a delightful valet called Adolph—Ada, of course, has kissed them both—and these two are perhaps the most interesting characters in a book which depends largely upon its characterisation for effect. R. S.

"Sea-Legs"

"Rilette's" painting for H. Dennis Bradley is apropos of nothing. If it seeks a purpose it is merely to show that there may be still something in the world worth living for.

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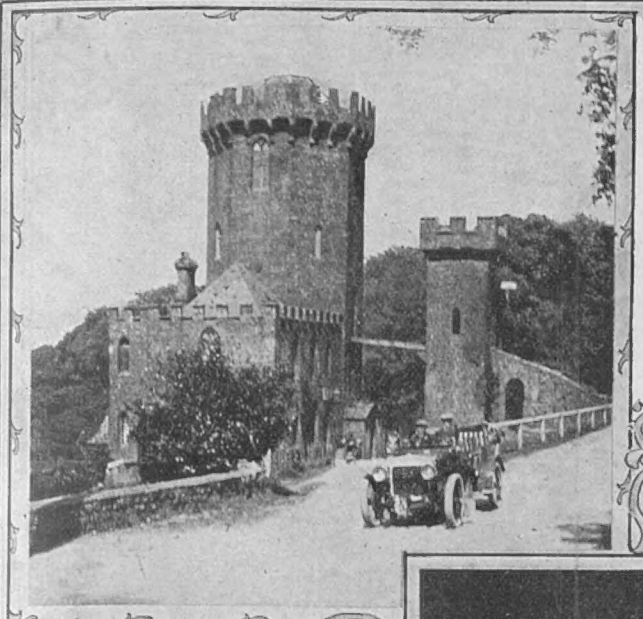

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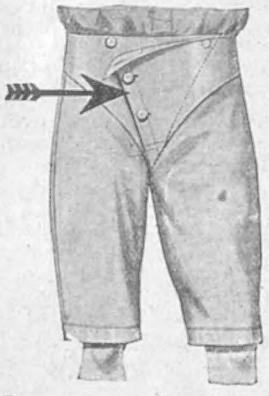

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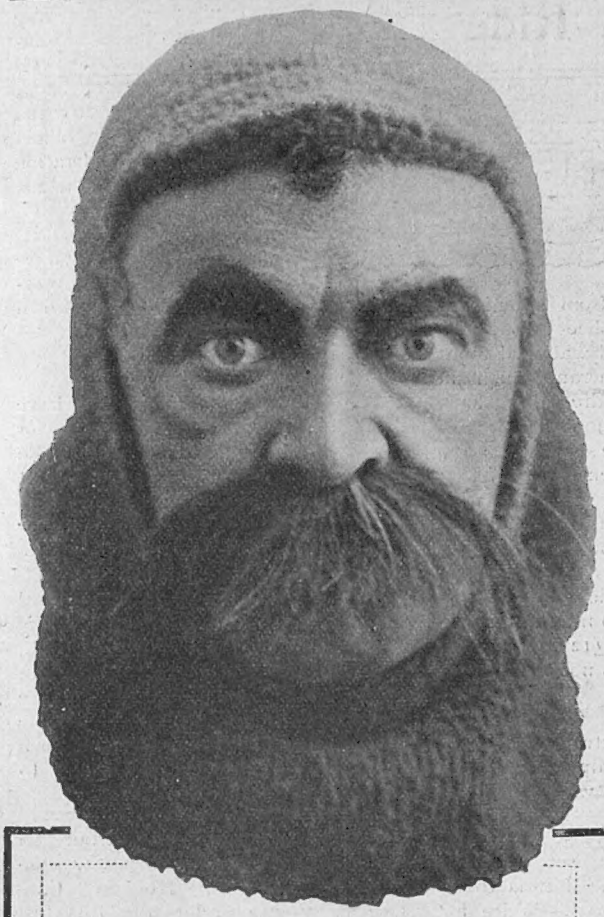

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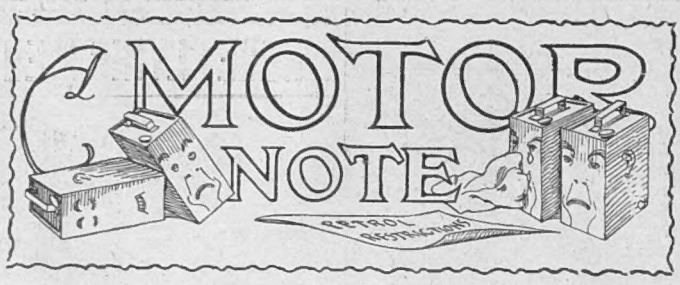

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Cheerful Sunbeams

THE amounts payable to the Government for excess profits duty and munitions levy on the results of the Sunbeam Company's year's working up to August, 1916, have not yet been ascertained. Similarly with 1917. Which, naturally, prevents said Sunbeam Company from submitting a detailed balance-sheet; but the company are sufficiently satisfied about the situation to warrant them in making a few healthy allocations. As, for example—£900 balance of dividend on preference shares; £24,000 representing 10 per cent. (free of tax) on ordinary shares, making with interim dividend already paid, 15 per cent. for the year; £12,000, representing bonus of 1s. per share (free of tax) on ordinary shares. Which, taking into consideration the £900 interim on preference shares and the £12,000 on ordinaries paid in April, is not too dusty a result.

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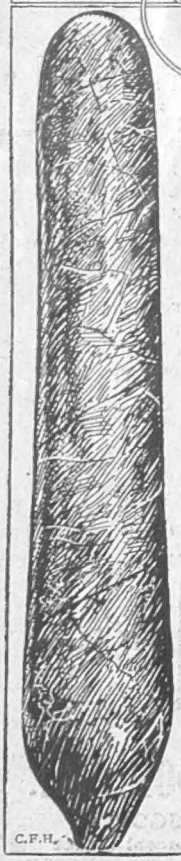

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